United Nations A/61/158

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 115 of the provisional agenda*
Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 56/270, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on an annual basis on the progress made in the construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa.

The present report provides the required progress information and an update on the actions taken to implement the project since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/60/532).

* A/61/150

06-43363 (E) 010806

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 56/270, the General Assembly approved the construction of additional office facilities at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa, with a total area of approximately 6,770 square metres, and the utilization of an amount of $7,711,800 for that purpose, to be financed within the available balance of the construction-in-progress account.

2. Subsequent to the above, in section VII of its resolution 60/248, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/532) and endorsed the related recommendations of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/60/7/Add.21) to expand the scope of the project to include the construction of two additional floors to be completed simultaneously with the originally approved four floors. The total capacity of the new office facilities would be 9,550 square metres, with a total estimated project cost of $11,383,300.

3. In accordance with the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 56/270, progress reports are to be submitted to it on an annual basis. The present report provides information on the progress made in the implementation of the project since the issuance of the previous annual reports of the Secretary-General (A/59/444 and A/60/532).

II. Status of allocation of additional land by the host country

4. In his previous report, the Secretary-General informed the General Assembly that the title of deed and the addendum to the host country agreement reflecting the allocation of additional land by Ethiopia to ECA had been submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs. The title deed has now been signed, giving ECA possession of the land.

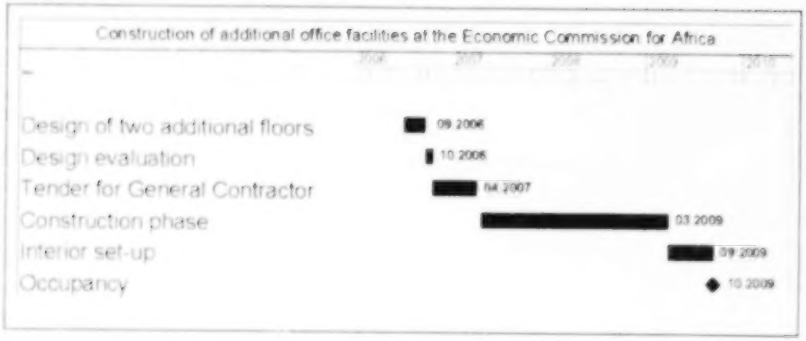
5. As regards the addendum, the document has been cleared by the Office of Legal Affairs and submitted to the host country Government for approval. The matter is pending clarification by the host country Government on language wording and is expected to be settled in the near future.

6. At the same time, actions have been taken to coordinate with local authorities regarding the design and timely construction of an alternative public access road to the one that currently runs through the allocated additional land. It is understood that the Addis Ababa municipality has been requested to fund the construction of the alternative access road.

III. Status of development of the project

7. A summary of the updated project schedule is provided in table 1 below. Following the approval by the General Assembly to expand the scope of the project to include the construction of two additional floors to be completed simultaneously with the originally approved four floors, the construction documents had to be revised. In that connection, an amendment to the architect's contract was signed in July 2006.

Table 1
Revised project schedule



8. Completion of the final construction documents by the architect is expected by the latter half of 2006. Subject to the satisfactory nature of the documents, an international tender for selecting a general contractor to undertake the construction is expected to be issued by the end of 2006.

9. In the meantime, prospective general contractors have been solicited by the Procurement Service through the issuance of an expression of interest, to which several local and international firms have responded. The pre-screening of firms to be included in the future bidding exercise has been finalized.

10. In parallel with the finalization of construction documents, ECA is conducting recruitment procedures for a new project coordinator to manage the construction phase of the project. The coordinator is expected to be recruited in time for the evaluation of the construction proposals.

IV. Cost estimates of the project

11. The total estimated cost of the project in the amount of $11,383,300 remains unchanged as approved by the General Assembly in section VII of its resolution 60/248. Table 2 provides a detailed cost breakdown.

Table 2
Cost plan
(United States dollars)

	Estimated costs[a] approved in 2005[b]
Construction costs	7 488 600
Design, consultancy services	774 700
Site work, fire protection, local area networks/wide area networks, lighting, security, audio systems	1 153 300
Workstations and furniture	262 800
Project coordination	610 200
Construction contingencies	1 093 700
Total	**11 383 300**

[a] Includes estimated provision for contingencies, inflation and currency fluctuations.
[b] By General Assembly resolution 60/248.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

12. **The additional land has been allocated by the host country; consequently, actions have been taken to coordinate with the host country Government to finalize the amendment to reflect as much in the host country agreement.**

13. **During the reporting period, the project time schedule was revised in connection with the expansion of the original scope to include the construction of the two additional floors simultaneously with the originally approved project.**

14. **The final construction documents are now being completed. It is anticipated that the selection of a general construction contractor will be finalized by the first half of 2007 and that construction work will commence immediately thereafter.**

15. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.**

06-43363